

REMARKS

The final Office action mailed on 21 April 2005 (Paper No. 20050222) has been carefully considered.

Claims 3, 6, 8, 9, 14, 15, 17, 18, 20, 23 and 24 are canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, and claims 1, 4, 7, 10, 12, 13, 16, 19 and 21 are being amended. Thus, claims 1, 4, 5, 10 thru 13, 16, 19, 21 and 22 are pending in the application.

It should be noted that independent claims 1, 7, 13 and 19 are being amended for the purpose of correcting minor errors and improve form, and also for the purpose of combining them with dependent claims 3 (re claim 1), 8 and 9 (re claim 7), 14 and 15 (re claim 13), and 20 (re claim 19), while amending some of the dependent claims merely for consistency. Thus, the amendment of the claims does not raise new issues requiring further consideration and/or search by the Examiner, and thus this Amendment After Final should be entered.

On pages 3-6 of the final Office action, the Examiner rejected claims 1 and 3 thru 24 under 35 U.S.C. §103 for alleged unpatentability over Anderson *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 6,567,122 in view of Applicant's Admitted Prior Art (AAPA). For the reasons stated below, it is submitted that the invention recited in the claims, as now amended, is distinguishable from the prior art cited by the Examiner so as to preclude rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Independent claims 1 and 13 recite the network system of the present invention as comprising the new and non-obvious combination of at least one network unit, a dynamic host configuration protocol (DHCP) server, and an agent server, the agent server including a communication unit, a database, and a control unit with the new and non-obvious functions recited in the claims. Similarly, independent method claims 7 and 9 recite a method of controlling a network system having a DHCP server, an agent server, and at least one network unit, with the steps of claims 7 and 19 corresponding to the functions recited in independent system claims 1 and 13. Thus, the functions and steps recited in system claims 1 and 13 and method claims 7 and 19, respectively, define the invention in a manner distinguishable from the prior art so as to preclude rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103.

Each of independent claims 1, 7, 13 and 19 recites the network system as including a dynamic host configuration protocol (DHCP) server. As recited in independent system claim 1, the DHCP server is responsive to a request from each network unit for assigning a variable Internet protocol (IP) address to each network unit for a predetermined period of time. As recited in independent system claim 13, the IP address is assigned to each network unit by the DHCP server. In addition, as recited in independent method claims 7 and 19, the method of the present invention includes an initial step of requesting a variable IP address for each network unit from the DHCP server when the network unit is powered up, as well as the step of transmitting the requested IP address from the DHCP server to each network unit. Finally, each of the independent claims recites that the “unique identification

information” comprises at least one of an Ethernet address and a search keyword for a variable IP address of a network unit.

The single patent cited and applied by the Examiner, Anderson *et al.* ‘122, does not disclose, suggest or even mention a DHCP server as a part of the system disclosed in that patent. Thus, the invention as recited in independent claims 1, 7, 13 and 19 is distinguishable from Anderson *et al.* ‘122 on this basis alone.

On page 4 of the Office action, the Examiner admits that the system and method of Anderson *et al.* ‘122 fail to expressly disclose a DHCP server. However, the Examiner contends that Anderson *et al.* ‘122 suggests that a DHCP server is involved when it describes a network unit as changing addresses each time it establishes an Internet connection (citing column 9, lines 4-9 and column 12, line 57 thru column 13, line 12). However, none of the portions of the text of Anderson *et al.* ‘122 cited by the Examiner mentions or suggests the involvement of a DHCP server in the changing of an address of a network unit each time it establishes an Internet connection.

In paragraph 13 on pages 4 and 5 of the final Office action, the Examiner further suggests that DHCP servers were “well known in the art at the time of the present invention” (quoting from the sentence bridging pages 4 and 5 of the final Office action). However, the Examiner does not cite any evidence in support of the statement.

At the top of page 5 of the final Office action, the Examiner alleges that the Applicant “admits this in a discussion of the related art”, citing page 2, paragraph 6 of the present application (*see* the first sentence on page 5 of the final Office action). However, one of ordinary skill in the art, at the time of the invention, would not have had access to the present application. Thus, it is doubtful that one of ordinary skill in the art, upon reviewing the disclosure of Anderson *et al.* ‘122, would receive sufficient information to modify the disclosure of Anderson *et al.* ‘122 so as to add a DHCP server to that disclosure. It is submitted that the only reason that the Examiner is able to make that modification to Anderson *et al.* ‘122 is due to the fact that the Examiner (unlike one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention) has had access to the disclosure of the present application.

Further considering the portions of Anderson *et al.* ‘122 cited by the Examiner at the bottom of page 4 of the final Office action, the patent does mention the use of ID server 760 to maintain a registry 1001 of relevant Internet addresses so as to solve the “unknown address” problem encountered by users attempting to access another Internet location (for example, *see* column 12, lines 57-67 of Anderson *et al.* ‘122). However, in the final Office action, the Examiner has cited ID server 760 of Anderson *et al.* ‘122 as corresponding to the claimed “agent server”. Thus, the ID server 760 of Anderson *et al.* ‘122 cannot serve as a DHCP server in the Examiner’s scenario since, according to that scenario, the ID server 760 corresponds to the claimed “agent server”.

Finally, Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose or suggest the provision, transfer and use of "unique identification information" comprising at least one of an Ethernet address and a search keyword for a variable IP address of each network unit, as now recited in claims 1, 7, 13 and 19.

To summarize, Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose each and every element and function as recited in the independent claims of the present application. Moreover, one of ordinary skill in the art, upon reviewing Anderson *et al.* '122 as of date of the invention, would not be provided with sufficient information to modify that disclosure so as to arrive at the present invention, as suggested by the Examiner in the final Office action.

Independent system claims 1 and 13 recite an agent server which includes a communication unit for receiving unique identification information comprising an Ethernet address and a search keyword for a variable IP address for each network unit, the latter data being stored in a database or storing means. As further recited in independent claims 1 and 13, the communication unit also receives, from the user, unique identification information comprising an Ethernet address and a search keyword for a variable IP address for a network unit selected by the user.

Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose a communication unit for performing the functions recited in independent claims 1 and 13. In the final Office action, the Examiner

attempts to counter the latter argument by alleging that Anderson *et al.* '122 contains a sufficient disclosure of the general functions of the elements recited in the claims of the present application. However, Applicant is not claiming the functions alone, but is claiming (in each of the independent claims) an arrangement of elements for performing the functions recited in independent claims 1 and 13, as well as the steps recited in independent claims 7 and 19. Thus, it cannot be said that Anderson *et al.* '122 discloses or suggest a communication unit for performing the specific functions recited in independent claims 1 and 13.

Furthermore, independent method claims 7 and 19 recite method steps corresponding to the functions set forth above relative to the communication unit. Thus, method claims 7 and 19 are also distinguishable from the disclosure of Anderson *et al.* '122 on that basis.

Independent system claims 1 and 13 further recite the agent server as including a control unit connected to the communication unit and to the database or storing means for receiving from the user unique identification information comprising an Ethernet address and a search keyword for a network unit selected by the user. Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose or suggest a control unit for performing this function. Independent method claims 7 and 19 recite method steps corresponding to the latter function of the control unit (*see* step (d) of each claim), and thus the method recited in claims 7 and 19 is further distinguishable from the disclosure of Anderson *et al.* '122 on that basis.

As mentioned above, in the final Office action, the Examiner alleges that Anderson *et al.* '122 discloses, in general terms, the functions and/or steps recited in the claims of the present application. However, as mentioned above, Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose the recited elements for performing those functions or steps, as recited in independent claims 1, 7, 13 and 19. Therefore, it cannot be said that one of ordinary skill in the art, upon reviewing the disclosure of Anderson *et al.* '122 at the time of the invention, would receive sufficient information to modify the disclosure of that patent so as to arrive at an arrangement of elements identical to the arrangement of elements recited in claims 1, 7, 13 and 19 or the present application.

Furthermore, as recited in independent system claims 1 and 13, the control unit searches the database or storing means for a variable IP address of the network unit selected by the user on the basis of the unique identification information received from the user, and then responds to the results produced by the search for enabling the user to gain access to the selected network unit. In contrast, Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose a control unit as recited in independent claims 1 and 13, much less a control unit for performing the function recited in the claims and just discussed above.

Independent method claims 7 and 19 recite steps corresponding to the latter function of the control unit (*see* steps (d) and (e) of each method claim), and thus the invention recited in claims 7 and 19 is further distinguishable from Anderson *et al.* '122 on that basis.

To summarize, independent system claims 1 and 13 recite an agent server having a communication unit, a database and a control unit with the functions recited in the claims. In contrast, Anderson *et al.* '122 does not disclose the details of an agent server, and thus does not disclose a communication unit or a control unit having the functions recited in the claims.

Finally, independent method claims 7 and 19 recite steps corresponding to the functions of the communication unit and the control unit recited in system claims 1 and 13, and thus independent claims 7 and 19 are distinguishable from the disclosure of Anderson *et al.* '122 on a similar basis.

In view of the above, it is submitted that the claims of this application are in condition for allowance, and early issuance thereof is solicited. Should any questions remain unresolved, the Examiner is requested to telephone Applicant's attorney.

No fee is incurred by this Amendment After Final.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. E. Bushnell", is written over a horizontal line.

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